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Committee for Programme and Coordination
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Agenda item 7
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-sixth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: evaluation
(Item 3 (c))

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the United Nations Environment Programme

1. At its 4th meeting, on 1 June 2016, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (E/AC.51/2016/2).

2. The Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services introduced the report and, together with representatives of UNEP, responded to questions raised during its consideration by the Committee.

Discussion

3. Delegations expressed appreciation for the comprehensive nature of the report, which they termed useful and interesting. General agreement with the results and conclusions was expressed, as was support for the recommendations, which delegations affirmed as reflecting sound management practices.

4. Delegations commended UNEP for its action to implement the recommendations and encouraged it to continue its progress towards their full implementation. In particular, delegations cited the Programme's progress in institutionalizing its use of results-based budgeting and strengthening its regional presence. In that regard, UNEP

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was commended for having continued to implement recommendation 3, which was focused on the need for it to strengthen its regional offices, by having issued an operational guidance note since the publication of the OIOS report.

5. Delegations sought further clarification from UNEP on factors preventing it from fully implementing individual recommendations. Some asked why Umoja had been a hindrance to the finalization of the partner feedback mechanism (recommendation 1); why the development of a database to track requests for its capacity-building assistance and a strategic plan for its capacity-building services had stalled (recommendation 2); what specific measures UNEP had taken to strengthen its regional offices (recommendation 3); and how UNEP could establish clear and transparent criteria for allocating resources to activities in the thematic priority areas and measure the impact of those activities, and why the allocation of resources from the Environment Fund had been challenging (recommendation 4). A delegation stated with concern that staff change and turnover, regarded by UNEP as factors obstructing the implementation of recommendations 1 and 2, could not be rational reasons why UNEP had been unable to implement those recommendations fully, suggesting that the Programme should devise a framework that would not be affected in such a way. Remarks were made and clarification was sought regarding the continued gaps in the allocation of resources from the Environment Fund and measures being taken by management to address the issue. Positive comments were made regarding recommendation 5, relating to putting in place a full complement of seven full-time subprogramme coordinators and its usefulness in avoiding duplication, while at the same time it was noted that work should continue with regard to that recommendation.

6. A delegation noted that, as evidenced in the report, there had been a tendency for UNEP to stretch its mandate, especially after the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, going beyond its original mandate and overlapping with other bodies. As examples, the number of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session and the eventual overlapping of functions between UNEP and the high-level political forum on sustainable development with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were cited. A comment was also made that the strengthening of UNEP at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development should have enhanced its efficiency to achieve its primary mandated tasks.

7. Regarding the regional presence of UNEP, a delegation said that the opening of a regional office in Montevideo, alongside the office in Panama, was highly appreciated. It was pointed out, however, that the new office lacked both the financial and human resources to fulfil its mandate.

Conclusions and recommendations

8. **The Committee decided to defer consideration of the report of OIOS on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of UNEP (E/AC.51/2016/2) to its fifty-seventh session.**